Mountain Pipeline Project

The summer of 1979 was a year of big projects and groundbreaking change. In August that year, the Thomlinson farm constructed a water line in the desert topography of the Okanagan.

The project was greenlit by joint landowners on the acreage, whose topography was a measured 14 inch incline and entirely dry, granite scrapings concluded the substance on the crust.

Work began in the morning with Tom Savas, the neighbor. As was coherent with the socio-economic stature of the team, we had to use our own bodies and machetes to clear the brambles and thorns off the precipice.

The very location where water could be sourced from the well was a pile of artificial gravel, brought in the previous two years to support the housing project above the acreage. During the first morning, overflow sledge trenches were being digged by machete and pickaxe.

The project was so fast-paced, piping was brought in that afternoon. The first rolls of plastic 5cm piping was brought, but in the terrain, a trench was unfeasible and was replaced with above-ground gravel, which later would become unnecessary.

The pipeline causes health and safety distress, because during the first couple years it was running directly through yellowjacket territory, and in 1977 a top landowner reacted seriously to the allergy, being hospitalized.

By 5pm, it was connected the full length, 150 meters from water pump to faucet. A worker volunteer was tasked with climbing an “obstacle course” 5 times as leaks and drips were discovered continuously.

If it was not worth it, He didn’t want to know, so he went to the beach and picked thistles out of his socks for the evening. The next day, the faucet was improved with tripods formed out of sticks.

Legend would have it, in 1982 they would have to drive the winding Westside Road at night- in the dark - to repair an explosion at the well.